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UNCLAS AMMAN 003050

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQ

Summary

-- A lead story in all papers today, May 22, highlights America's "strong" warning of potential attacks in the near future. Same story reports the arrest of three Moroccans in Saudi Arabia for planning to hijack a plane for suicide bombing purposes against Saudi targets. Stories also report on President Bush's "intended" visit to the region. Reports on preparations for the Jordanian parliamentary elections continue, with the majority of commentaries hoping for and expecting transparent and democratic elections.

Editorial Commentary

-- "The mass graves!"

Daily columnist Hilmi Al-Asmar, writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (05/22): "Finally, we `discovered' mass graves in Iraq. Piles of skeletons and human bones are shown on televisions, where bereaved families and orphans stand looking, trying to identify their lost loved ones. A heartbreaking scene. But, Saddam Hussein was not the only dictator in the world, and mass graves is not an Iraqi invention.. The mass graves of Iraq are similarly found in many parts of this wretched earth. No one remembers those others and no one mentions `civil rights' and `human rights' until these issues have some relationship with serving Israel or oil. And here stands Palestine, a living witness to the ugliness of the `world order'."

GNEHM